



Faculty of Applied and Creative Arts

## **AN ILLUSTRATION BOOK FOR TRADITIONAL CHINESE HOKKIEN WEDDING CUSTOMS**

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**Bachelor of Applied Arts with Honours  
(Design Technology)  
2014**



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**AN ILLUSTRATION BOOK FOR TRADITIONAL CHINESE HOKKIEN  
WEDDING CUSTOMS**

TAN CHING MAY

This project is submitted in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Applied Arts with Honours  
(Design Technology)

Faculty of Applied and Creative Arts  
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SARAWAK  
2014

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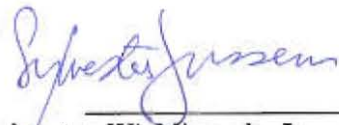
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### **Abstract**

Nowadays, books about the traditional wedding customs of the Chinese are long winding and it is being shelved by society. Thus, this research is carried out for the purpose of identifying the wedding customs of the Chinese Hokkien through the use of illustration books. The illustration books use the application of different types of drawing techniques and media which are suitable in delivering the message of the wedding customs to attract the readers. Visual concepts that are used in the illustration books are not just easily understandable, but make it memorable as well by using attractive illustrations.

## **Abstrak**

*Pada masa kini, buku adat resam perkahwinan masyarakat Cina dipaparkan dalam bentuk ayat yang panjang dan kurang mendapat perhatian masyarakat. Oleh itu, kajian ini dijalankan untuk mengenalpasti adat resam perkahwinan masyarakat Cina Hokkien melalui buku ilustrasi. Selain itu, ia turut mengaplikasikan pelbagai teknik ilustrasi dan jenis media yang bersesuaian dalam menyampaikan mesej adat resam perkahwinan masyarakat Cina Hokkien dan menarik minat kepada pengguna. Konsep visual yang digunakan dalam buku ilustrasi adat resam perkahwinan masyarakat Cina Hokkien adalah mudah difahami dan diingati berdasarkan ilustrasi yang menarik.*

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.0 Research Background**

Chinese community in Malaysia is made up of numerous ethnic groups. They are Mandarin, Hakka, Hokkien, Cantonese, Hainanese and Teochew. Thus, different ethnics have difference cultural and marriage equipment. Hokkien is the largest in chinese dialect spoken among the Malaysia Chinese community. Originally, hokkien people were descendants of the earliest Chinese settlers on the Peninsula who originated mainly from Fujian. Nowadays, majority of Chinese in Malaysia used Hokkien as a trade language to converse with other Chinese in particular regions, regardless their ethnic background.

The definition of marriage found in the Oxford Dictionaries is the legally or formally recognized union of a man and a woman (or, in some jurisdictions, two people of the same sex) as partners in a relationship. According to the traditional Chinese culture, birth, death, and marriage are most important in our life. For us, marriage is a rite of passage to adulthood and it is the time when we finally become bonded to a lifelong companion. Therefore, it is an important event when we start up a family. Chinese wedding culture is a vital part of Chinese tradition. Many rituals have been lost in of history, but many are observed even today. Marriage is important to maintain the family unit through which the ancestor can be continued from one generation to another. Thus, a marriage needs to be planned and managed better. According to their beliefs, married couples without following the customary rules will be considered as invalid.

### **1.0.1 Traditional Chinese Hokkien Wedding Customs & Rituals**

Despite China's long history and many different geographical areas, it was very important to follow the basic principle, generally known as "Three Letters and Six Etiquettes," which is essential to a marriage. This is important to conduct marriage ritual properly, as any minor step overlooked might cause grave consequences to the prosperity of the clan. Marriage is initiated by series of three letters such as request letter, gift letter and wedding letter. Request letter from the groom's family sent to the bride's family as request for marriage. The gift letter would accompanies the gifts from groom's family to the bride's family before the wedding. Wedding letter will be given on wedding day by groom's family as act accepting bride.

Chinese word for etiquette is define as customs and gifts. Six etiquettes such as proposal, birthdates, bride price, wedding gifts, arranging the wedding and wedding ceremony. A proposal is conduct by matchmaker to convey the groom's family request to the bride's side. If bride's family did not object the proposal, matchmaker will do some calculation and matching based on couples' birthdates. After that, groom's family will arranges matchmaker to deliver gifts, including the betrothal letter to the bride's family. The wedding gifts (Guo Da Li) will be sent by the groom to confirm the acceptance of the marriage. Then, both families will choose a good day as wedding day which will bring luck and prosperous to the couple, based on the Chinese Calendar Mythology. Final ritual is actual wedding ceremony where bride and groom become a married couple.

Preparations of Traditional Chinese Hokkien Wedding Customs are very important. Wedding is a ceremony of joining two families clan by their son and daughter, the couple. Detail of Hokkien Wedding procedure is date picking, proposal, betrothal gift, bed setting, the dowry, wedding outfits, hair combing blessings, actual wedding ceremony and return home.



### **1.0.2 Illustration**

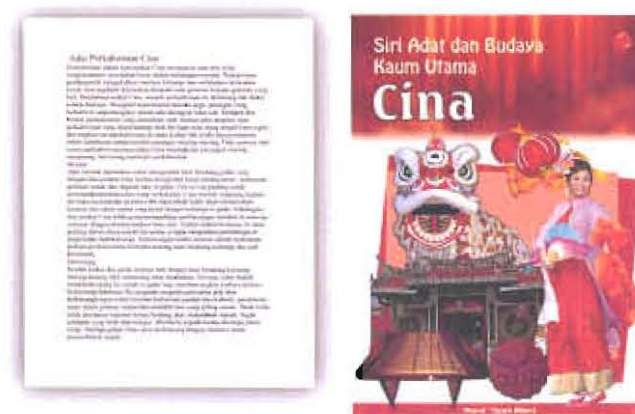
The definition of illustration found in the Princeton's WordNet is a visual representation that is used make some subject more pleasing or easier to understand. Illustration are important in our life. Illustration sits somewhere between art and graphic design. Using illustration to convey message perceives visual information quicker, and it holds the message longer in the memory. It can be useful for people with bad memory and for those with hearing disabilities. Besides that, illustration serve education purposes from the very beginning of human's life. Illustration can be an advertising to attracting people's attention. Nowadays, illustration used in book, magazine and advertisement.

Studies done by researcher to create an illustration book for traditional Chinese Hokkien Wedding customs. Content of the illustration book is about the wedding procedure of the Hokkien. Researcher provide simple explanation and attractive illustration in order to impress reader regarding the rituals.

## 1.1 Problem Statement

### 1.1.1 Lack of visual elements usage in the Traditional Chinese Hokkien Wedding Customs book

Traditional Chinese Wedding Customs has problem with visual communication in term of body text. Wedding custom book available focus more on words and lack of visual elements usage. Most textbook illustrations do not appear to serve an important instructional function. (Levin & Mayer,1993 ; Woodward 1993).



*Figure 1: Lack of visual element*

### 1.1.2 Young generation lack of understanding about Traditional Chinese Hokkien Wedding Customs

Young people today are exposed to a large variety of "Western" influences which are disseminated through the mass media such as books and magazines, television, video cassettes and movies, resulting in the acquisition of distorted ideas regarding love, sex, and marriage. (Tan Teik Beng 1986) Young generation are lack of understanding about Chinese Hokkien wedding custome such as bridal bed setting, hair combing ceremony and so on.

## **1.2 Objectives of Research**

- i. To identify the wedding customs of the Chinese Hokkien through the use of illustration.
- ii. To analyze the different kinds of illustration that are suitable in carrying out the message of the traditional customs of the Chinese Hokkien.
- iii. To propose a design for the illustration book which would attract the attention from the general public.
- iv. To validate the design of the illustration book as to allow it to be a source of reference for society.

## **1.3 Hypothesis**

Hokkien wedding procedure is an important element for us as a grand ceremony in once in a life time. Promote and provide explanation of traditional Chinese Hokkien wedding customs through visual information with illustration book. To workout an illustration book for traditional Chinese Hokkien wedding customs by hand-drawing using mix media to deliver the message. Besides, less text and more illustration from the book will be able to attract the readers as it is easy reading and memorable.

## **1.4 Scope of Study**

The research will focus on the use of different types of drawing techniques, media, paper and fabric to create a unique Traditional Chinese Hokkien Wedding Customs book. This study focus on young generation who tends to forget about the traditional Chinese Hokkien wedding customs. Illustration used to promote the traditional Chinese Hokkien wedding customs for the other culture who are interesting in Chinese wedding customs.

### **1.5 Limitation of the research**

This research focus on traditional Chinese Hokkien wedding. Study done in a particular area, which is in Klang, Selangor. Availability of Chinese wedding book are limited and lack of explanation for their procedure. Some books were published in Chinese and it is hard to bring the accurate information in English as a single Chinese word carry multiple meaning. Limitation of time given and many traditions have been simplified by researcher to recording of the wedding procedure. Information can only be gathered through interview and website which are related to traditional Chinese Hokkien wedding.

### **1.6 Conclusion**

In the end of this chapter, important information such as research background, identify the problem statement, objective of research, scope of study and limitation were stated above. Researcher will apply different types of drawing techniques to provide a quality book.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

Literature review is an evaluative report to find relevant information to achieve the objective. A critical review of the literature shows how prevailing ideas fit into thesis and how your thesis agrees or differs from them. Research towards book, journal and internet was done to obtain information related to create an illustration book for traditional Chinese Hokkien wedding customs. In this research, need to understand the theory and apply during the process of designing to achieve the objective. Following were the information obtained from those sources:

#### Illustration

“Illustration is one of the most powerful forms of communications. It captivates us, and it makes us smile. Illustration makes a message or text of a story beautiful that may seem banal otherwise. It fills the communication gap that can’t be explained with words and is something everyone in the world can relate to illustration also gives people the honor of experiencing my awesome imagination.”

(Ryan Feerer, 2010)

Statement above show that illustration book have a powerful forms to communications with readers. Illustration help to clarity idea, solve problem, interpret, amplify and enrich words and tell stories. Thus, used illustration deliver Chinese hokkien wedding procedure messages more easy to understand by readers. Therefore, illustration could create a Chinese hokkien wedding book to be more interesting to attract attention readers.



## Image

“One cannot communicate by words alone. Nearly any kind of written communication can benefit from the addition of visual images: photographs or illustration. The old saw is that a picture is worth a thousand words. Extrapolating on that, a picture and a few word are worth the thousand words.”

(Robert Bohle, 1990)

“When text and image each other’s spaces, new and powerful relationships and stories can emerge.

(Poynor, 2004)

Two statement above shows that picture themselves have a communicative value. That ancient Chinese Proverb say that a picture is worth a thousand words. Then, a picture and less word able to perceive the information more quickly and memory. So, image and text must never be seen as something separate from the content of the publication. No matter what kind of books, text and imagery have been combined.